

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 373
By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to honor the Washington County Jonesborough Library and upon its 100th anniversary.

WHEREAS, in 1896, Mrs. L. H. Patton and Mrs. J. B. Simpson traveled to New York and obtained a commitment for 300 books from the Lend A Hand Society to begin Jonesborough's first library; in that memorable year, what would become the Washington County-Jonesborough Library began in one small room on the first floor of a building on Jonesborough's Main Street, opening for one hour every Wednesday afternoon; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Patton envisioned a library that served the county far beyond its four walls; so shortly before the turn of the century, Mrs. Patton had a bookcase made, filled it with books and placed it on a buggy, giving Jonesborough its first traveling library; and

WHEREAS, the ladies of Jonesborough's Schubert Club developed a keen interest in the success of the town's new library, and in 1902, they offered to share their space with the library and pay half of the expenses, in addition to helping with library work; and

WHEREAS, in 1904, the Banking and Trust Company offered the library the second floor of their building free of rent; grateful for the generous offer, friends of the library moved the holdings to the new location where the library remained for twenty-two fruitful years; and

WHEREAS, the ladies of the Schubert Club continued to commit their time and resources to the library and one of their most valued members, Miss Ethel Smith, kept the

library open; the club's tireless efforts prompted both an increase in the library's holdings and tremendous growth in the circulation; and

WHEREAS, to help the new Jonesborough High School better serve its students, supporters of the library agreed to move the holdings to the second floor of the school in 1926; Mrs. Henry Hoss of the Schubert Club was appointed librarian in 1932 and the library's number of books and periodicals continued to grow; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Jury Room of the Washington County courthouse became the library's next home with Mrs. Panhorst Cooke in charge; quickly outgrowing its space in the courthouse, the library was moved to the Chester Inn in 1952, wherein the Washington County Library Association was created and the library was officially named; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Panhorst Cooke was formally instated as the librarian in the early 1950s and this fine lady served for a total of twenty-five exemplary years, keeping the library open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons; Mrs. Panhorst was joined by a second dedicated librarian, Mrs. Margaret Henry, who helped the library expand its operating hours and enlarge its array of standard services; and

WHEREAS, as Washington County's population grew in the 1960s, the desire for library services increased; guided by the Watauga Regional Library Board, the Washington County Library Board, Mrs. Anna Lou Rowe and other concerned citizens were able to establish a Bookmobile Station and a branch library in Gray; and

WHEREAS, the branch library became a reality in the early 1970s because of the efforts of dedicated and devoted citizens; the library was first housed in the basement of the Gray Funeral Home with Mrs. Louise Wine as librarian and Mrs. Johnny Fox and Mrs. Fred Hensley assisting; the branch library was also housed in the elementary school and in a double-wide trailer before finding a permanent home; and

WHEREAS, while housed in the double-wide trailer, Mrs. Hensley served as branch librarian, assisted by Mrs. Lucille Deakins; in spite of their limited resources and inadequate

space, Mrs. Hensley and Mrs. Deakins helped the library earn a prominent place in the community by offering extensive children's programs, in addition to reference service, reader guidance and interlibrary loans; and

WHEREAS, by the late 1970s the Jonesborough library's collection boasted over 20,000 volumes, 46 periodicals, access to non-print materials and audiovisual equipment available for circulation; Mrs. Kaye Jones became library coordinator in 1977 and took on the task of developing specialized children's services; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rhea Wells, a well-known author of children's books and an artist, held a special place in his heart for the Washington County-Jonesborough Library and willed his home to the library association upon his death; after refurbishment, the Wells home proved to be a perfect place for the new children's programs, which began with a storytime program for preschoolers in September of 1977; and

WHEREAS, Jonesborough's citizens demonstrated their ever-increasing commitment to the library each and every year, and in 1978, a Friends Group was organized to expand and promote library services and raise money through popular town events; and

WHEREAS, realizing the need for more space and parking, the library board and sponsors began efforts to create a new library facility; with the help of Washington County, the Town of Jonesborough, Tennessee Valley Authority, Aerojet and other corporations, governmental agencies and many dedicated individuals, the new facility became a reality in the mid-1980s, just in time for the Tennessee Homecoming '86 celebration; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Suzanne Tuggle became the Library Director in 1983; she gave unreservedly of herself as both a leader and an extra pair of hands as the library prepared for its groundbreaking in March of 1985 and its big move in September of 1986; and

WHEREAS, today the Washington County-Jonesborough Library is a successful fiscal agent of the county and resides in a modern building along with the Visitor's Center and

Museum, the Town Hall, and the Post Office in what was once known as Duncan's Meadow;
and

WHEREAS, with a fine atmosphere for study, adequate space to conduct programs and plenty of room to grow, the new Washington County-Jonesborough Library has truly become a regional library; the library has been able to not only increase its holdings, but also expand its popular Genealogy/Local History Collection; hire talented storyteller, Pam Johnson, as Children's Librarian; expand adult and children's programs, including those for summer reading; and move toward full automation, including development of an on-line catalog and a circulation system and installation of Internet connections; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Debra Mattingly now heads the library; she has been both a source of inspiration and information as the library boldly steps into the era of technology; her extensive knowledge of computers and their capabilities have enabled the library to better serve the community in a number of ways; and

WHEREAS, like the parent library, the branch library moved to a new home; a large building was purchased in Gray, and, with the help of the Washington County Commission and local businesses, the building was converted into a roomy, modern branch library that offers a multitude of services and is headed by a professional librarian, Ms. Lusetta Jenkins; and

WHEREAS, the success of the Washington County-Jonesborough Library and its branch is a testament to what can be accomplished when state and local governments, businesses and individuals collaborate; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that upon the library's centennial anniversary, that this Assembly join the library, its staff and supporters in celebrating 100 years of amazing success; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING,
That we honor the staff and supporters of the Washington County-Jonesborough Library,

celebrate with them the library's rich history, and congratulate them upon 100 years of unparalleled service to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copies.